

HOUSE BILL NO. 400

INTRODUCED BY KEANE, COHENOUR, GALVIN-HALCRO

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT INCREASING AN INDIVIDUAL'S MINIMUM WEEKLY UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT AMOUNT FROM 15 PERCENT TO 19 PERCENT OF THE AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE; AMENDING SECTION 39-51-2201, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 39-51-2201, MCA, is amended to read:

"39-51-2201. Weekly benefit amount -- determination of average weekly wage. (1) An individual's weekly benefit amount must be an amount equal to 1% of the total base period wages or equal to 1.9% of the total wages paid in the 2 calendar quarters in which wages were the highest during the base period. The weekly benefit amount, if not a multiple of \$1, must be rounded to the nearest lower full dollar amount. However, the amount may not be less than the minimum or more than the maximum weekly benefit amount.

(2) On or before May 31 of each year, the total wages paid by all employers as reported on contribution reports submitted on or before that date for the preceding calendar year must be divided by the average monthly number of individuals employed during the same preceding calendar year as reported on the contribution reports. The amount obtained is the average annual wage. The average annual wage divided by 52, rounded to the nearest cent, is the average weekly wage. The maximum weekly benefit amount is 66.5% of the average weekly wage and must be applied to all maximum weekly benefit amount claims for benefits filed to establish a benefit year commencing on or after July 1 of the same year. The maximum weekly benefit amount, if not a multiple of \$1, must be computed to the nearest lower full dollar amount.

(3) The minimum weekly benefit amount must be ~~45%~~ 19% of the average weekly wage. The minimum weekly benefit amount, if not a multiple of \$1, must be computed to the nearest lower full dollar amount."

NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2005.

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